



**Keurig
DrPepper**

State of Beverages
2026 Trend Report



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Message from Tim Cofer:

Welcome to our second annual **State of Beverages Trend Report!** In our inaugural report last year, one of the clearest dividing lines was the generational differences in how people sip. This year, we decided to dive deeper to understand how Gen Z and Gen Alpha are truly changing the game.

For decades, beverage decisions were driven by habit. Morning routines. Familiar favorites. Trusted rituals. Those haven't gone away. But what's changed, especially among Gen Z and Gen Alpha, is what's happening on top of them.

Today, choice is more intentional, emotional and personal than ever. People are selecting beverages based on how they feel, what they're doing and how they want to show up in a given moment. As a result, beverages are playing a bigger role in everyday life – not because people are drinking more, but because every choice carries more meaning.

This year's report reflects that evolution, grounded in data that spotlights the outsized role younger generations are playing in shaping what comes next and what it means for how brands need to show up. We hope this year's report offers a clear view into where beverage behaviors are heading and sparks fresh thinking about the growing role beverages play in people's lives.

—Cheers!

Tim Cofer
Chief Executive Officer



Overview

These five trends capture where we believe the beverage category is heading as consumers, especially younger generations, bring more intention, emotion and individuality to every sip. Together, they reveal a shift driven less by what people drink and more by how and why they choose beverages across moments and occasions. Beverages are moving beyond routine to become more personal, reflecting how people feel, how they want to show up and the lives they are living.



01 Liquid Identity

You are what you drink. For Gen Alpha and Gen Z, every beverage choice doubles as a personal statement.



02 Intentional Sipping

Gone are the days of drinking on autopilot. Today's beverage occasions are curated, social and mood-matched.



03 Rotation Reigns

Rotations are in. Younger consumers rotate fluidly across flavors, functions and categories.



04 Redefining Wellness

Wellness isn't about saying no, it's about feeling good saying yes. Balance, benefits and enjoyment now coexist.



05 Digital Discovery

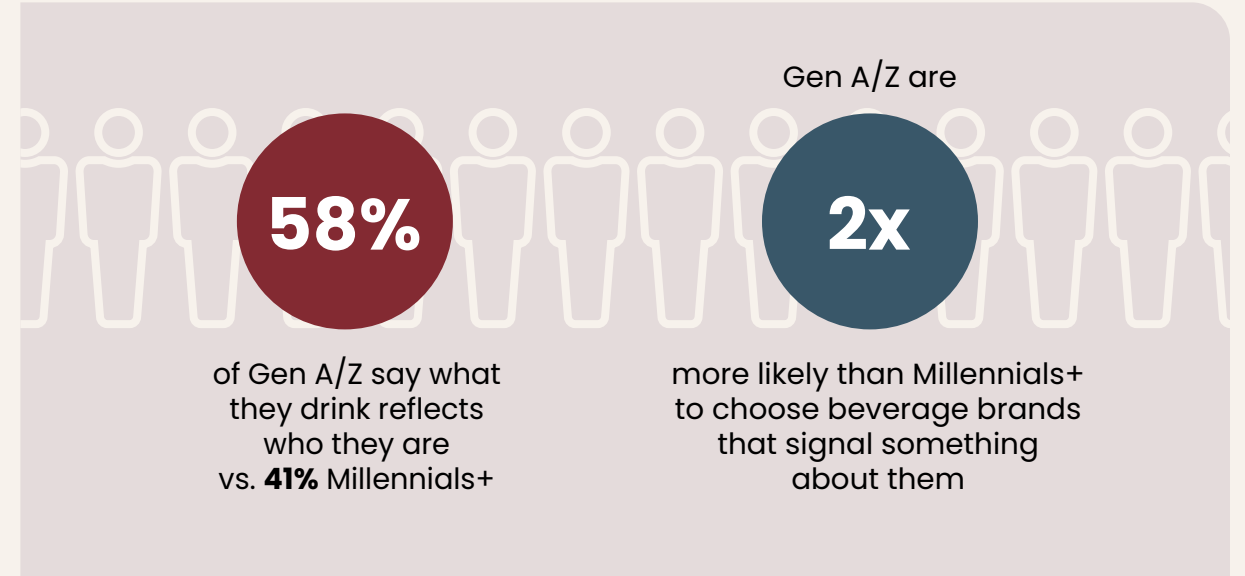
The shelf doesn't launch brands anymore – the feed does. Discovery is now social, algorithmic and personal.

01 Liquid Identity



One of the core shifts among younger generations is a fundamental change in what beverages mean: they're starting to function as signals of identity.

What you drink is no longer just about taste or habit; it increasingly reflects how you want to show up in everyday moments. For Gen Alpha and Gen Z specifically, beverage choice is a form of self-expression:



For Gen A/Z, a brand feels like theirs if it:

01

Reflects their lifestyle

02

Is inclusive and representative

03

Has a strong social presence

04

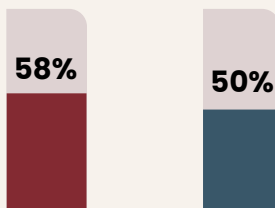
Has a playful, bold or distinctive personality

01

This sense of identity shows up not just in what they choose, but in how far they're willing to explore:



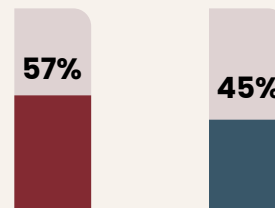
Looking for completely new or unexpected flavors



Gen A/Z Millennials+



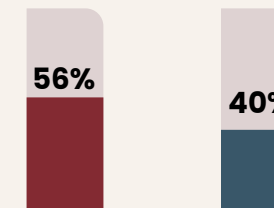
Seeking globally inspired options



Gen A/Z Millennials+



Actively looking for limited-edition beverages



Gen A/Z Millennials+



KDP BRAND SPOTLIGHT:

We're building brands people see themselves in. From limited-time offerings like Dr Pepper Creamy Coconut and 7UP Shirley Temple to globally inspired flavors like Bai Baru Blood Orange, our innovation fuels self-expression. Culture-forward brands like Clamato and customizable "dirty soda" foodservice offerings turn our beverages into personal statements.

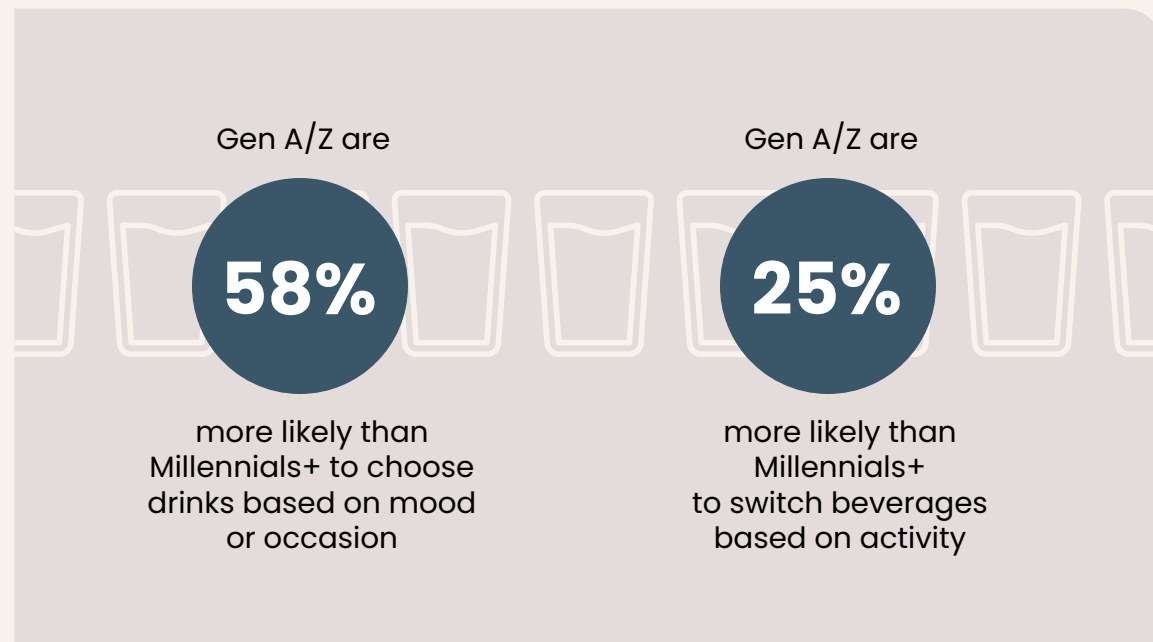
02

Intentional Sipping



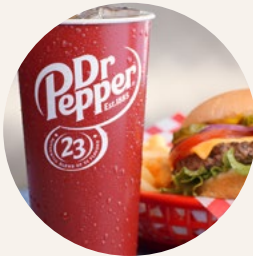
Consumers aren't abandoning routines. The same moments still exist: an afternoon break, time with friends, a quiet night in.

But those moments are becoming more intentional and more personal. Beverages are no longer just something that fits the moment; they're helping define how it feels, shaping the emotional experience of time spent alone or together.

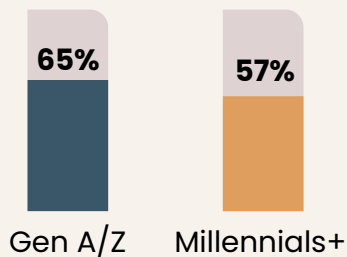


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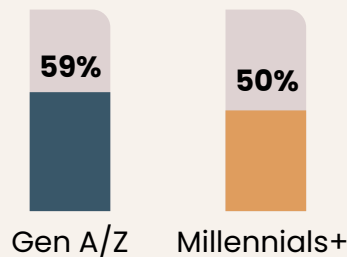
Increasingly, those moments are becoming more social and dynamic, shaped by what's happening around them. For Gen A/Z in particular, beverage occasions are less likely to be static or solitary and more likely to happen with others, away from home and alongside food. Moments are shifting from individual routines to shared experiences.



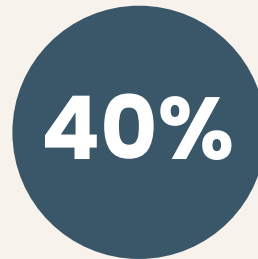
Beverage occasions are with food



Beverage occasions are with others



Gen A/Z are

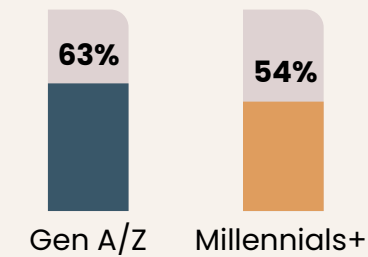


more likely than Millennials+ to consume beverages away from home

As a result, expectations for what a beverage delivers in these moments are rising.



Want beverages that entertain or inspire



Gen A/Z are



more likely to seek out beverages to feel nostalgic than older generations



KDP BRAND SPOTLIGHT:

As moments become more personal, our portfolio is designed to show up with purpose. Mott's anchors everyday family rituals, Canada Dry and A&W elevate comfort occasions, and Snapple offers a break from pressure with bold flavor and an honest voice. We're helping shape how moments are experienced.

03

Rotation Reigns



As beverage moments become more intentional, consumer behavior is following. The idea of a single “go-to” drink is fading, especially among younger consumers. Rather than replacing favorites, they’re expanding their choices — building broader repertoires that flex across moments and needs.



Gen A/Z have an average of **5 emotional and functional needs** per beverage occasion vs. **4** Millennials+

That shift is accelerating exploration, with flavor acting as a key unlock:



81%

of Gen A/Z are drawn to fruity and juicy profiles vs. **76%** Millennials+



75%

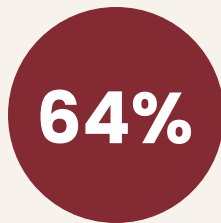
of Gen A/Z prefer sweet or indulgent flavors vs. **68%** Millennials+



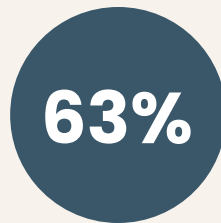
72%

of Gen A/Z gravitate toward citrus-forward flavors vs. **68%** Millennials+

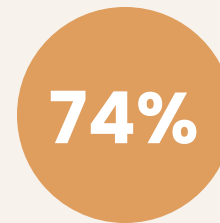
03



of Gen A/Z prefer bold, intense taste experiences vs. **58%** Millennials+



of Gen A/Z are interested in dessert-inspired options vs. **55%** Millennials+



of Gen A/Z coffee occasions are flavored—more than 2x Millennials+ (**32%**)

Differences also emerge in category behavior:

Gen A/Z consume an average of **6 beverage categories weekly** vs. **5** among Millennials+.

Gen A/Z are expanding their beverage mix across more categories:



59% drink bottled water weekly vs. **55%** Millennials+



54% drink soda weekly vs. **50%** Millennials+



50% drink juice weekly vs. **37%** Millennials+



Social posts featuring drink “lineups” and beverage rotation are up **30%** year-over-year, pointing to a shift from one go-to drink to more intentional, varied choices.



KDP BRAND SPOTLIGHT:

In 2026, we are launching more than 40 new varieties across flavors and formats. The lineup spans everything from Canada Dry Fruit Splash Strawberry to Snapple’s Two Hundred Fif-TEA Party. It also includes café-inspired lattes, iced refreshers, seasonal offerings and premium roasts from Keurig Coffee Collective, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, The Original Donut Shop and McCafé.

04 Redefining Wellness



Health remains one of the most important forces in beverage choice, and what it means is expanding. Today, wellness goes beyond nutrition alone to encompass balance, enjoyment and feel-good benefits.

When Millennials+ choose a beverage for its benefits, health is often grounded in discipline: reducing sugar, managing intake and making trade-offs.

Compared with younger generations, Millennials+ are:

48%

more focused on reducing sugar

51%

more focused on managing intake

Compared to Millennials+, Gen A/Z motivations are broader and more integrated into daily life. Wellness is less about restriction and more about supporting how they want to feel mentally, physically and emotionally.

GenA/Z are:



Mental focus

31%

more likely to prioritize mental focus



Sustained energy

41%

more likely to prioritize sustained energy

04

Gen A/Z are more likely than Millennials+ to drink functional and performance-driven beverages across every major category:



~60%

more likely to consume enhanced water (with electrolytes, minerals and/or vitamins) in the past day



~50%

more likely to consume protein beverages weekly



2x

more likely to consume energy drinks weekly



~75%

more likely to consume sports drinks weekly

The topic “Emotional Support Beverage” has increased in social media conversation by

+140%

in the last year.

Importantly, Gen A/Z aren’t choosing between health or enjoyment. They expect both, often in the same product. That’s why they over-index on beverages that deliver both functional benefits and flavor-forward, indulgent experiences.

71% of Gen A/Z look for function-forward beverages vs. **66%** of Millennials+



KDP BRAND SPOTLIGHT:

We’re expanding mini cans for right-sized enjoyment, innovating with plant-based options like Mott’s Fruit Smoothies with oatmilk and growing zero sugar choices. Performance brands like GHOST Energy continue to meet modern lifestyles with new formats and flavors. And in cafés, Peet’s Coffee is tapping into functional demand with new protein-infused lattes and smoothies designed for everyday energy and balance.

05 Digital Discovery



How consumers are discovering beverages is changing fast.

Discovery is no longer anchored to the shelf. It's now happening as part of a connected ecosystem where digital touchpoints and personal networks shape what people try and buy :



70%

of Gen A/Z rely on reviews and ratings vs. **54%** of Millennials+



66%

of Gen A/Z look at online product recommendations vs. **51%** of Millennials+



63%

of Gen A/Z are influenced by what friends, creators or social feeds are drinking vs. **48%** of Millennials+

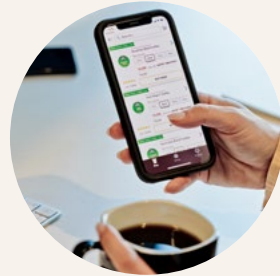


50%

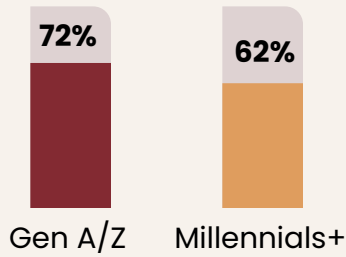
of Gen A/Z use digital tools (e.g. QR codes, AI recommendations) to find new beverages vs. **40%** of Millennials+

05

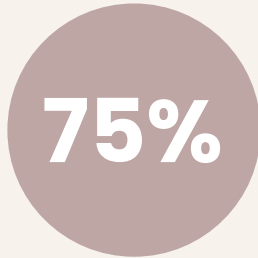
Within that shift, personalization is becoming the expectation:



Influenced by personalized recommendations



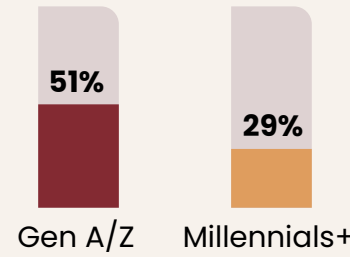
Gen A/Z are



more likely than Millennials+ to say their expectations for personalized beverage experiences have increased over the past five years



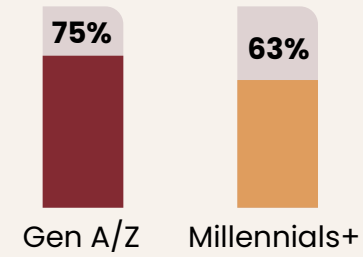
More likely to buy from beverage brands that personalize experiences or recommendations



The physical shelf still matters, but it's part of a broader discovery journey:



Say eye-catching in-store displays influence their choices



KEURIG
K-Mini Mate

Add style and flavor to campus life.

[Buy Now](#)

KDP BRAND SPOTLIGHT:

Discovery is now algorithm driven — and our marketing is built for it. We've shifted to an always on, digital-first model shaped by culture, creators and real-time signals. Efforts have spanned a fan-made Dr Pepper jingle turned national spot, Fansville's fandom-based personalization and Keurig K-Mini Mate content tailored to how people live with, display and use their brewers.



Methodology

The Keurig Dr Pepper (KDP) State of Beverages 2026 Trend Report was derived from a variety of quantitative and qualitative data sources, including national surveys from YouGov, Ipsos and Morning Consult, as well as KDP's own proprietary data. For the purposes of this report, generations are grouped as Gen A/Z (ages 13–29) and Millennials+ (ages 30+).

This research included an online quantitative survey conducted by YouGov on behalf of KDP. The survey was fielded from February 27 to March 9, 2026, among 6,130 U.S. adults ages 18+ and 824 teenagers ages 13–17, who were recruited through their parents via the YouGov panel. Of the teen respondents, 515 were ages 13–15 (Gen Alpha). All respondents reported consuming beverages at least monthly. Beverage categories included bottled and packaged water, coffee, tea, juice, carbonated soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks, milk and dairy-based beverages, protein or nutrition drinks, powdered mixes and alcoholic and non-alcoholic alternative beverages (the latter asked only of respondents ages 21+). The median survey length was 18 minutes for adults and 19 minutes for teen respondents. The nationally representative U.S. adult (18+) sample are accurate to within ± 2.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Our KDP Ipsos consumption tracker is an ongoing proprietary online survey, with responses from over 64,000 consumers to date. The Morning Consult survey data presented is based on a nationally representative online survey among 2,500 U.S. respondents aged 13+, fielded from March 27 to 30, 2026.

Select social media insights were identified through a KDP-led year-over-year analysis comparing calendar year 2025 to 2024. This analysis examined changes in conversation volume and thematic trends related to emotional benefits, beverage rotation and multi-drink behaviors across major social media platforms.